

REMARKS

Claims 17-45 are pending in the application. Claims 37-45 are added via the foregoing amendments.

35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claims 17-19 and 21-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nilsson (US Patent No. 3,643,521).

Applicant amends independent claims 17-19, 22, 31-34 and 36 to include features not disclosed by Nilsson. In particular, claims 17, 18, 22, 31, 32, 34 and 36 are amended to recite that the housing member or retaining ring includes a side that extends radially inward to cover an axial end portion of the lubricant supply device. Further, claims 17, 18, 22, 31, 32, 34 and 36 are amended to describe that the axial end portion of the lubricant supply device faces in a longitudinal direction away from nut member.

Claims 19 and 33 are amended to recite that said housing member (claim 19) and retaining ring (claim 33) have an end surface that faces towards said end surface of said nut member. Claims 19 and 33 are also amended to recite that said housing member (claim 19) and retaining ring (claim 33) have a side portion opposite said end surface, which covers an axial end of said lubricant supply device, said axial end facing away from said nut member in a longitudinal direction of said screw shaft.

Nilsson fails to disclose at least these features. As an initial matter, Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the interview of July 1, 2005, wherein the above-

noted features were discussed. In particular, it was noted that element 22 in Figure 1 of Nilsson is applied against the claimed housing member and retaining ring. An exemplary, non-limiting embodiment of the present invention is shown in Figures 12 and 13, and includes a side extending radially inward to cover an axial end portion of the lubricant supply device. This axial end portion of the lubricant supply device faces away from the nut member in a longitudinal direction of the screw shaft. Nilsson does not disclose at least this feature.

In particular, the axial end face of the alleged lubricant supply device 17 in Nilsson is not covered by the housing 22. Instead, the housing of Nilsson is cut flush with the axial end face of element 17 so as to not cover the axial end face. During the above noted teleconference, the Examiner appeared to agree that this feature defines over Nilsson. The features of claims 19 and 33 are also not disclosed by Nilsson for similar reasons.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the features of claims 17-19, 22, 31-34 and 36 are not disclosed by Nilsson, such that the rejection thereof under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn. The rejection of dependent claims 21, 23-30 and 35 should similarly be withdrawn at least by virtue of these claims respectively depending from claims 17, 18, 19, 22 and 31.

Claims 19-21, 25 and 33

Claims 19-21, 25 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Spontelli (US 2,818,745).

Claim 19 recites a housing member which is secured to said nut member and houses said lubricant supply device. Claim 33 recites a retaining ring that stores said lubricant supply device

and is fixed to said nut member. Applicant submits that member 19 of Spontelli neither houses nor stores the lubricant supply device. Instead, it is element 21 of Spontelli that would be understood by one skilled in the art as housing or storing the lubricant supply device. The explicit language of Spontelli even supports Applicant's position by referring to element 21 (not 19) as being the "housing" member (see col. 2, line 8). However, element 21 fails to disclose the further defined features of claims 19 and 33 because it does not disclose at least the recited end surface that faces towards said end surface of said nut member, when the end surface of the claimed nut member is recited as facing in a longitudinal direction of the screw shaft. Instead, the end surface of element 21 in Spontelli is positioned around an outer circumference of the nut member 12, such that its end surface cannot face an end surface of the nut member, in the manner recited in claims 19 and 33.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the features of claims 19 and 33 are not disclosed by Spontelli, such that the rejection thereof under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn. Similarly, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of dependent claims 20, 21 and 25 should be withdrawn at least by virtue of these claims respectively depending upon claim 19.

NEW CLAIMS:

Applicant adds new claims 37-45 to obtain more varied protection for the invention. Claims 37-45 further define that the lubricant supply device contains either a "lubricant oil or grease." Applicant respectfully submits that these claims read on the electing embodiment and are neither taught nor suggested by the applied references.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
Appln. No.: 10/763,186

Attorney Docket No.: Q79580

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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